

PEACE NEWS

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"THE ONLY SECURITY: FREEDOM FROM FEAR"

—Kathleen Lonsdale

"WHY do people agree to war-preparations? Is it because they think they will win a war if it comes? In atomic war there can be no victors, only vanquished. Or is it because they think that armaments bring a sense of security? I have just returned from six months in the United States and the Americans, so far from feeling secure in their monopoly of the atom bomb, are obsessed with fear and suspicion."

FAMILY SERVICE UNITS INAUGURATED

Lord Balfour pays tribute to Pacifist Service Units

A PUBLIC event of great interest to supporters of pacifist service took place in the Manchester Town Hall recently, when the Inaugural Meeting of the Manchester and Salford Family Service Unit was held.

Family Service Units is a new organisation formed to develop the pioneer work with slum problem families which has been undertaken so successfully for the past six years by the Pacifist Service Units in Liverpool and Manchester districts. From small beginnings the Service has been developed to the stage when it is necessary for it to become the responsibility of a wider section of the community.

The meeting, presided over by the Lord Mayor of Manchester, was attended by nearly two hundred individuals and representatives from all sections of the local community; local authorities, government departments, religious bodies, social service and professional organisations, political parties and women's associations. Opening the meeting, which launched an appeal for £3,000, the Lord Mayor (Alderman Mary L. Kingsmill Jones, OBE, JP), said that it was the duty of every citizen to be concerned about the submerged or problem families, and she paid tribute to the work of the Units in helping families to rehabilitate themselves.

"PROBLEM FAMILIES"

The Rt. Hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, who is the Hon. Treasurer of the National Committee of FSU, told how he learned of the work of the Pacifist Units through reading a review of their book, "Problem Families," in the Manchester Guardian in Jan., 1946, and of the steps he took in co-operation with PSU to form a National Committee to take over the work.

The Hon. David Bowes-Lyon is Chairman, and the Committee includes the Archbishop of York, Cardinal Griffin, Miss Margaret Bondfield, Mr. Seeborn Rowntree, Mr. John Watson and Sir Lancelot Kay. The main national social service organisations and four Government Departments have co-operated in the formation of the Committee.

Lord Balfour said that although he profoundly disagreed with pacifism (he felt that mankind was not yet civilised enough for pacifism to work), he was full of admiration for the work which the Pacifist Service Units had undertaken in medical research into scabies, and with problem families, whom he regarded as presenting one of the most serious of social problems.

Many Local Authorities had ignored the problem in the past, and Lord Balfour felt that the PSU had brought light to what had been dark places, and that their work represented one of the most hopeful lines of attack on the problem. He envisaged FSU continuing as a voluntary body, and working in co-operation with Local Authorities.

The aims of FSU are to undertake intensive rehabilitation work, to study the causes of family deterioration, and to develop preventative measures. The preservation of sound and healthy home life is vital to the national welfare, and the children of problem families must be helped to have a chance of developing normally. Lord Balfour, in conclusion, emphasised that the work called for a high degree of devotion on the part of the workers, and a willingness to offer their friendship to these families when all other means had failed.

Edgar McCoy, Casework Organiser of Manchester and Salford Unit, described the work, methods and

organisation of the Unit, and told in detail of the progress of a family from a state of degradation and squalor to normal living conditions, with the help of the Unit.

Mr. F. S. Stancliffe, Chairman of the Board of Governors, Royal Manchester Children's Hospital, appealed for financial support for the Unit. He said that many children entered hospitals through parental neglect.

He declared that whatever people may have thought about the views of the pacifists who had undertaken the work, they had showed themselves to be the Commandos of social service, and he praised their sincerity and hard work.

To those who said that the problem families are hopeless and should be consigned to the lethal chamber he would say, might not the Almighty be as justified in saying that about the whole human race, considering their behaviour in recent years?

Unit members had undertaken the work for many years at great financial sacrifice, and the new organisation would pay salaries to the full-time workers from Jan. 1, 1948.

These were the words of Dr. Kathleen Lonsdale, FRS, the eminent scientist, when she addressed a meeting at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, last Monday. Emphasising the fact that there is no defence against the atom bomb, Dr. Lonsdale pointed out that:

All talk about ARP is "dangerous nonsense": even if the populations of our cities were accommodated in deep shelters, they could never come out of them because of the radio-active atmosphere above—Bikini is still unfit for human habitation.

The atomic bomb is "a treacherous weapon" which could be introduced into a country without the need for aircraft at all—in a suitcase or parcel.

Though people say that it might not be used, simply because no army could occupy the country it had devastated, there is no reason why an army should want to occupy it, the enemy having been completely eliminated.

The only security worth having, and the only security which can be had in the world today, is "mental freedom from fear." We should demonstrate our freedom from fear by unilateral disarmament. That may be utopian—but a world without war is Utopia. The sole alternatives before us are total idealism and total destruction.

HAPPY COUPLE

Dr. Lonsdale compared the great powers to a man and wife living in perpetual fear of being poisoned by each other. "Personally," she exclaimed, "I would rather take the risk of being poisoned than go on living like that."

"Let us put ourselves above suspicion. At present we are still creating a vested interest in preparation

for war. Even in peace-time we keep up our military men, our Ministry of War (why not a Ministry of Peace?), our war-correspondents (where are our peace-correspondents?).

"Instead of rearing a generation which shall look on war as an obsolete horror of the pre-atomic age, like human sacrifice or cannibalism, we placard the streets with posters advertising the army as 'a man's job.' We still talk of war as a glorified game. War is not a game: it is an affair of heads and arms being blown off, of melting eyes, of marrow slowly destroyed in the bones, of people being skinned alive and women bearing monstrosities.

HIGHEST MOTIVES

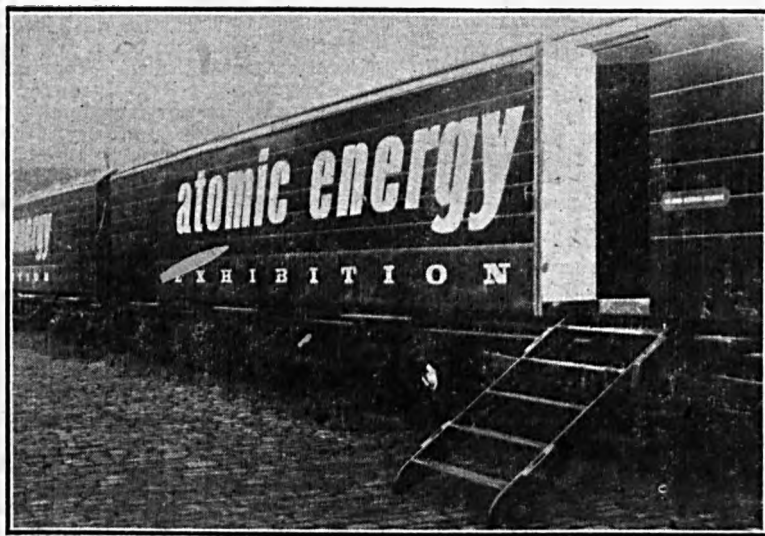
"I know all this is done from the highest motives—dreadful things generally are. There are people who realise that retaliation is utterly un-Christian if it is undertaken for our own sakes, but justify it when it is undertaken for others. But if we are really so concerned for others, let us prove it by devoting our energy to the hundred-and-one jobs of real service which desperately need to be undertaken. We shall accomplish more by that because as things are, we are rearing a generation so confused that it hardly knows right from wrong."

Earlier in the meeting, Prof. M. H. L. Pryce, of the Clarendon atomic research laboratory, after discussing the potentialities of nuclear fission for good and evil, had drawn attention to the choice which would face the people of this country in a few years' time: between making use of our supplies of plutonium for the production of electricity for industrial purposes, and stock-piling it for atomic bombs. The Atomic Scientists' Association is trying to educate the people into the implications of atomic fission, by means of literature and the Atomic Train Exhibition at present touring the country. It will rest with an educated public opinion to make the choice. There was no doubt of his own decision.

The meeting had been arranged by the Peace Pledge Union. As the Chairman, David Spreckley, said, it was essentially "educative."

The small audience which had groped its way through thick fog to the well-lighted Caxton Hall seemed to symbolise the minority which is trying to grope its way through the dreadful perplexities and confusion of our time, in search of the illumination that comes from intellectual clarity and moral conviction: two qualities personified in Prof. Pryce and Dr. Lonsdale.

It was significant that those who heard them, when they dispersed once more into the fog, were carrying lighted torches.



THE ATOMIC TRAIN EXHIBITION

DEMOCRACY—THREATENED BY ITSELF

IT seems to me that the order of importance of the week's events is not, as I imagine most people would say, first the Big Four Conference, second the by-elections, third the developments in France, and to a lesser extent in Italy—with the Mosley revival and the Palestine problem running pretty evenly for fourth place.

My own classification, if it is worth while attempting to classify a thickly entangled mess of linked-up events, would be—and here I must stress the words importance of the events: first, the developments in France and Italy; second, the Mosley revival; third, the Big Four; fourth, the by-elections; fifth, Palestine. My reasons for this order of importance will become plain in due course. Let us deal first with the Conference.

On the day this is written most people are holding their breath, wondering if by any chance they dare to hope; and nobody dares to hope so recklessly as to dare to say that he is hoping for a full settlement of the German question. The Conference

would have broken down by now if the western powers had not given way under Russia's first flat refusal. Mr. Molotov was emphatic and final in not agreeing to discussion of the Austrian

COMMENTARY by ROY SHERWOOD

problem before the infinitely harder German one was tackled. So the Conference is still alive—though it may be dead by the time this is printed—and once again the whole western world is puzzled by so much stiff-necked Russian unreasonableness, and pleased with its own conciliatory patience.

Nationalistic thinking

WELL, that may do for ninety people out of every hundred, and I have no quarrel with the commentators of the political dailies who take that view. But I am less resigned

when I find it shared by Mr. Bevin and even by Llewellyn Chatter, who wrote this commentary last week. They drive me to the conclusion that in their judgment there is still a sediment of parti pris—which is not quite prejudice but something very close to it—inasmuch as it shows a remnant of nationalistic thinking; and even Mr. Vishinsky, at his angriest, does not glare more banefully than the fact that nationalistic thinking, at this stage of the world's history, is on the level of policy what the atomic bomb is in the field of armaments. The only difference between them is one of time. The nationalistic thinking comes first, the bomb comes second. But, given the first, the second follows with dead certainty.

The other side

LET us see if we can remove the sediment of parti pris. Having no use for the rarefied kind of pacifism which sits in contemplation of its

(CONTINUED ON PAGE SIX)

PEACE NEWS

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SEDITIONOUS LIBEL

THE acquittal of James Caunt, Editor of The Morecambe and Heysham Visitor, on a charge of "seditious libel" arising from his virulent anti-semitic articles, has been greeted with mixed feelings by the public: not unnaturally, considering the mixed issues involved. But the very fact shows how necessary it is that we should sort these issues out, and discuss them freely and dispassionately.

With the verdict itself, of course, there can be no dispute. Given British Law as it is, Caunt was not guilty of a criminal offence, still less of "seditious libel." His acquittal, therefore, was a vindication of the first principle of British justice, which only the Communists (whose first principle was formulated, as well as illustrated, in the treason trials of Eastern Europe) can greet with other than relief.

A quite different question, however, is raised when the verdict is presented—as it has been, very widely—as a vindication of the "freedom of the Press." For it is possible to be unreservedly glad that the Law was not distorted to procure a conviction, and yet maintain that the Law as it is by no means the Law as it should be: that no precious freedom, in fact, would be infringed, were the fomenting of racial animosity to be classed with obscenity and libel.

There is a strong case for prohibiting anti-semitic propaganda in particular. The fact that difficulties would arise in the interpretation of the law, and some injustices almost certainly be committed, is insufficient excuse for ignoring it. All legislation is attended with such difficulties, and it is questionable, to say the least, whether the evils resulting would be more serious than those for which the Caunts of this world are responsible.

Before any such measure is discussed, however, one thing should be made absolutely clear: that although Nazism was anti-semitic, anti-semitism is not the same thing as Nazism, let alone Fascism. The question of prohibiting anti-semitic propaganda should on no account be confounded—as it is being, deliberately—with the prohibition of Fascist parties.

At a conference of the so-called National Council of Civil Liberties, in London the weekend before last, a resolution was adopted urging that all forms of anti-semitism be made illegal. At the same conference a Mr. S. Thorne had declared, "they ought to be prepared to go down to the level of the Fascists in combatting their evil propaganda. The only organisation which has gone out in the streets against the Fascists was the Communists" (Manchester Guardian, No. 26). That shows how imperative it is that we discriminate clearly and cautiously.

With the re-emergence of Sir Oswald Mosley, the Ridley Road scandals and his proclaimed intention to form a Union Movement, the demand has already been voiced in Parliament that Fascism be outlawed in this country. That demand can be justified upon one ground only—that the survival of democracy depends on the suppression of anti-democratic movements. Put thus, it has much to recommend it: as Michael de la Bedoyere writes (Catholic Herald, Nov. 21), "it might well be a good thing to forbid the public defence of Fascism and Communism, as of their nature inimical to liberty." At any rate, a motion couched in those terms would help to clarify, if it did not otherwise safeguard, the principle upon which democracy is founded. But any demand that Fascism alone be suppressed—and not because it is anti-democratic, but because it is anti-semitic—will neither clarify nor safeguard this principle: on the contrary, it will confuse and imperil it. Anti-semitism must not be identified with Fascism any more than democracy with Communism.

GERMANY— EQUAL AND FREE

IF there is any aspect of hell about the modern world, threatened, scared and beggared as it is, let us remember the good intentions which have paved the way.

Let us remember the "leaflet raids" on Germany, the declarations received in Parliament with loud cheers that the war was Hitler's responsibility and his only, and the promises for the German people once they were victorious over their dictator.

What did this nation propose? A real peace. A new order of justice for all. The right of all nations to live their own lives. Peaceful outlets for German energies and ambitions. Regard for the pledged word. Angels could not have done better in 1939, nor devils manage much worse now.

A nation divided

Consider the news we get repeatedly from across the North Sea. A country denied a government of its own. A people without either political or economic freedom. A nation divided between conquerors and under absolute foreign military control. A land where the masters feed while the people starve. Homes in ruins and no liberty to rebuild. Homes which still stand confiscated for the foreigners. A country plundered of its factories and machinery under the regulations of self-appointed judges of their own cause. An occupation without term; a people deprived of rights and existing without joy or hope.

How glad so many of us would be to learn that this catalogue of wrongs and miseries is exaggerated and extreme! How we would welcome authentic news that the position, after all, is not so bad! But every private source of information confirms the public news—the news that, when told by an official witness, recently, to a Newcastle Co-operative and Labour audience, evoked "gasps

of horror" from those present.

There is private compunction; yet, as with the national profiteering out of the forced labour of retained prisoners, the country as a whole has come to regard it as proper that the Germans and Germany should have no equal rights. It is content that foreigners should govern those sixty millions, and should mitigate sufferings only as masters over dependents. Not even this present crisis of our needs leads us as a people to enlist this numerous, industrious, normally vigorous people across the sea to be equally co-operative with us in creating a renewed plenty for all. For have not the Germans "brought their sufferings upon themselves?" Were they not "aggressors?"

Who is without sin?

Let the nation that is without sin cast the first stone! Britain, France, Russia, the United States—aggression at one period or another is written over their history for the world to see. But when the Germans conclude that behind our unhistorical righteousness lies a baser intention to end German trade competition, and capture German markets, even if it means ruining Germany, I do not believe this country to be so mean. Nor so stupid.

Already it must be plain to all that with Germany and Japan out of it, we are worse off and not better. Peoples rise and fall together. Germans hungry, cold, houseless, are accompanied by Britons poorly fed, less warm, short of clothing and houseroom. Morally it is the same. Negation of German rights is within a world which has seen oustings of other peoples from their homelands, political murders only crudely disguised, and ruthless power depriving

For a new economy

W. R. PAGE'S reply to my letter reveals that the Labour Pacifist Fellowship accepted Direction of Labour—believing it to be an evil principle—on the assumption that the crisis which necessitated it would be short-lived. But on what grounds does it believe that. I believe it will worsen.

Politicians—of all parties—refuse to face the fact that the economy of the Industrial Revolution has been in retreat or collapse ever since 1914; and the process continues. Thirty years ago Socialists preached that this would happen. Now that it is happening they refuse to believe it.

Mr. Page avoids the issue by pointing out that enormous problems would arise were we to try to change our economy! Of course there would; but the change is spiritually as well as economically necessary, as some of us have been insisting for years. The depersonalising effects of modern industrialism have undermined our democracy and degraded our social life by creating the mass mind and appeasing it with mass excitements. Already the mass man has by-passed culture and religion, and in due course he will by-pass democracy.

What is the good of economic security if it is to be bought with the degradation of mind and soul? Even were we to succeed with the export drive, we should merely be selling the nation's soul for a mess of pottage.

Then Mr. Page accuses me of being theoretical and not practical. That charge is not justified. Time after time I have indicated the lines on which the change-over to a new economy might proceed. I mentioned several in my Commentary a fortnight ago, while in "The Third Way" I have sketched a short political programme which could be extended if need be. The reason I do not elaborate a political programme is that the dumbness of the mass mind and the wishful thinking of political leaders would render it futile. I therefore make my appeals to a not inconsiderable minority in the hope that a few social units might be created which would serve as patterns of, or pointers to, the new society, when the day

of crisis arrives. In Wales there is a powerful nationalist movement, which has the vision of the kind of society which I envisage. I believe it is strong enough to begin this work of pattern-making now. Thereafter it could proceed politically under the steam of its new freedom.

The LPF pleads necessity. But Necessity is the excuse of every Dictatorship. Are we never to resist it? But resistance is not enough. We cannot live in a vacuum: we must rebuild.

WILFRED WELLOCK.

LETTERS

"End this cruelty"

MAY I express to the Rev. B. Hankinson my appreciation of his appeal to free all POWs. As a farmer's wife who has had prisoners billeted in our home I know something of the mental anguish that these men endure.

May I but quote one instance of my experience?

It was Sunday; the prisoner was working on a picture (he afterwards gave it to us for a souvenir). I turned to speak to him and to my amazement he burst into tears. I asked him if he was not happy in living with us.

In great stress of emotion he answered, "I cannot be happy anywhere, for my father and mother are perhaps dead." He had not heard from them for 3½ years, but eventually did so.

How often he would express the longing that he might go back to his own country, in order that he could provide a home for his aged father and mother, for they were now so poor.

After long waiting he finally got his desire, but alas only to arrive in time to see his father die.

Some time afterwards he wrote to me, saying: "These long months since my repatriation I have been confined to hospital suffering from lung trouble which the doctors say is due to privation and hardship of camp life during my long captivity."

Letters have now ceased. I fear that the war has claimed one more

UNIONS

WHEN Mosley held a press-conference last week to celebrate the inauguration of his "Union Movement"—one of whose objects would be to serve Russia with an ultimatum, "Submit to inspection, or else..."—the room was crowded out, and his words were reported at length in all the principal papers.

When the PPU tries to put before the nation a nobler alternative to war, a conspiracy of silence is maintained. Not a single paper published the appeal signed by thirteen eminent sponsors of the Union on the tenth anniversary of Dick Sheppard's death—with the exception of Peace News.

If pacifists really believe in their message, they will have to rely on their own efforts to get it across. If they show as much devotion to their cause as Fascists and Communists do to theirs, that can be done; and one way of doing it is to step up the circulation of Peace News. You can help directly by selling the paper, or indirectly by contributing to the Fund. The Fund is needed in any case to keep Peace News in existence.

THE EDITOR.

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other citizens of power. It is the world of the wearying national dissensions, the world with atomic, bacterial and chemical war menacing in the background.

Results of national self-righteousness, pride and practical contempt for others, from them what escape is there except that of sinking superiorities, and opening every door to Germany (and Japan) along with every other nation of the world? Dangerous? Far more perilous is our present state; just as it was more perilous to stay in India than generously to go. Costly? Never so costly as to have on British hands millions of people paupers by our bad will. But why argue these things?

The cost of two vast wars is that internationally we have lapsed into barbarism. But with all the modern resources of goodwill it need not and should not be a long-lasting fall. And here is the hope for peace-lovers. Ourselves feeling and acting toward Germany and Germans as toward any people equal and free, surely we may shorten the time of their bondage—and our shame!

PERCY REDFERN.

victim; a son of whom any English mother could have been proud.

As I look at his picture and think of his nobility of character, I can but re-echo those words "End this cruelty." Doing so we shall gain the blessing of Him who said: "As much as ye did it unto the least of these my Brethren, ye did it unto me."

MOLLIE COLLINSON.

Underneath,
Forest in Teesdale.

The reign of law

A CORRESPONDENT to The Listener raises the question, apropos of the Nuremberg Trials:

"Are these newly created laws only applicable to the defeated? If they apply to all men as international law, are there not persons equally guilty in all countries and isn't it therefore logical and just that all should be tried? Was it only Germany who broke the Hague Convention dealing with treatment of prisoners of war or are there countries which in their immunity to appear on trial are still breaking the Convention?"

Does not the universality of Law derive from its applicability to all and not merely to those defeated by military or majority power? And if it does, are we not mulcted in a common condemnation for acts of omission and commission?

Lenin's prophecy of the "gradual withering away of the law" in the Communist State has been sadly falsified by events. Having raised the evil geni of recrimination and revenge in Russia, they cannot be exorcised by UNO or Atlantic Charters, but drive nations and classes to fears and madness.

In the Christian tradition, only another Spirit can exorcise the demonic spirit of condemnation and destruction—grace not Law, mercy not sacrifice. But how to translate the phrase into fact is the problem of us all.

GEORGE M. LL. DAVIES.
Tynyfron, Dolwyddelan,
Carnarvonshire.

I RENOUNCE WAR AND I WILL NEVER SUPPORT OR SANCTION ANOTHER

This pledge, signed by each member, is the basis of the Peace Pledge Union. Send YOUR pledge to

P.P.U. HEADQUARTERS

Dick Sheppard House, Endsleigh St., WC1

"I knew a Doctor..."

I. IN CHINA

THE short and sturdy Chinese doctor was justly proud of her hospital in Tientsin.

In 1938 Japanese Forces occupying the city closed the special ward where she had taken in scores of drug addicts and cured them of their perilous craving, specially perilous since the Chinese Government had

by

MURIEL LESTER

recently enacted a law making the use of poisonous drugs, except for medical purposes punishable by death. The Japanese militarists, on the other hand, were finding the illegal drug traffic useful. It brought them vast profits and also robbed the Chinese of strength to resist either physically or spiritually.

A second hospital

Throughout the occupation this doctor continued her work and even extended it. During the war she set up and operated a second hospital. To be sure her work was often interfered with, sometimes tied up in red tape, sometimes interrupted by a spell in prison, but everything that came to her she accepted as a new opportunity for learning more about God, even the haunting memory of the horrible sounds she heard from tortured prisoners in adjoining cells.

On one occasion Toyohiko Kagawa came from Japan to Tientsin, but Chinese Christians felt it would be wrong to receive him in their homes and churches, seeing that he was brought in under the protection of an alien army. They knew it was not his wish to be thus compromised, but the fact remained.

The little doctor was the only one who made him welcome in a private house. She gave him the place of honour by the sitting room stove. These two stalwarts revelled in a long talk about the eternal verities, so blessedly unalterable by time or circumstance. Some of her neighbours were shocked, others envious of her courage.

Liberation

Then liberation came. After a few months the doctor, enquiring about the Japanese prisoners of war in the city, heard that the gaol hospital had a good many inmates. What sort of food were they getting, she asked. When she found that the low calory diet supplied to the ordinary prisoner was also given to the sick, she stirred up the spirit of her friends. Many agreed that of course good food ought to be given to invalids.

Gifts poured in, both in money and in kind. They were packed into a van along with the doctor. She told the driver to deliver her at the door of the Prison Office and then drive round

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HALF-MEASURES

IS it not wiser and more practical for idealists not to insist too rigidly on the imposition all at once of the ideal remedy, but to recognise that, in our half civilised society, reform can only be gradual and by stages?

Too often your out-and-out idealist is sadly lacking in kindly consideration for human nature, and refuses to give half-measures their right value. Yet those half-measures are, for the time being, more truly representative, and therefore more wisely in accordance with the free evolution of a good society, than a measure which imposes a revolutionary reform at one stroke, rejecting all compromise as a violation of principle.

I cannot help regarding such insistence not merely as an imposition but a tyranny: an imposed ideal ceases to be ideal; a half-measure, nearer to the mind of the community, voluntarily accepted, should not be rejected because it has in it elements of weakness and compromise. Not one of our great social reforms was brought about at a single stroke its completion had to be gradual. The Fabian Society laid the foundations of the socialism which is in power today by its acceptance of that same time-serving principle—time-serving in the best sense of the word. What other organisation, in the last two generations, so small in its origin, has achieved larger results?

The greatest reform

Now surely this applies as much to Pacifism, which aims at the greatest of all reforms that have ever been attempted—the abolition of war—as to other reforms of the past—many of which (such as the reform of our penal system) are still waiting for completion.

If we are honest we must know that out-and-out pacifism is not yet a reform which the Nation as a whole is prepared to accept.

The full outward expression of that reform would be total disarmament; but that is only the material expression; the spiritual expression and the far more important one is what Ruskin (hoping that England would so distinguish herself before the whole world) described as "a strange valour of goodwill to all nations." Total disarmament, Pacifists—though they can point to it as the one right aim and end—cannot possibly bring about either in the near or the measurable future.

But even while armies still exist, uselessly and wastefully, we can advocate that "strange valour of goodwill" by which the foundations of peace in the future may be laid. And we can advocate that our Government shall be called upon to help us to give it national expression: and the more voluntary the expression, the better and more effective will it be.

I have always believed, and have

at once to the back door and wait. He had to, for several hours.

The officer in charge of the gaol was obdurate. Why should Japanese prisoners eat good food? Better than his men were eating?

Her answer and his question were repeated again and again as, to his great chagrin, he found her still sitting in his office when by all the rules of ceremony she should have retired after their first interview. But he grew tired before she did. And round she went to the back of the prison and helped the driver to unpack the goods.

As they drove back she impressed on him the necessity of remembering that the next van-load they brought must be taken direct to the back door, as there was no longer any need to ask for official permission.

Words of Peace - No 229

The Choice

"Every good man, every good woman, should try to do away with war, to stop the appeal to savage force. Man, in a savage state, relies upon his strength, and decides for himself what is right and what is wrong. Civilised men do not settle their differences by a resort to arms. They submit the quarrel to arbitrators, and courts..."

R. G. INGERSOLL.
1889.

said it again and again since I became a pacifist, that, even in an armed world, the Nation which had the goodwill to organise a voluntary army for Peace Service to other notions in distress, through famine,

Laurence Housman here develops the theme of his article "The Ideal and the Practical," which appeared in Peace News on October 31.

or flood or earthquake or fire or hurricane or pestilence—giving that service freely wherever need arose, would be safe from aggression.

Direction of labour, in preparation for such service (if voluntarily given) could be welcomed by the sternest pacifist; with state-aid, such an army could become of international importance; and the larger it grew, and the more active and efficient it became, the more possible would it be to persuade even non-pacifists that in that direction lay more real security for peace than in the maintenance of armed forces, with the Atom Bomb lurking in the background to reduce by a few strokes all armed forces to foolishness.

The training necessary for making such a Peace-army effective could be directed to labour of national importance; and those serving in it, whether maintained by state-aid or by voluntary subscription, similar to the "Save Europe Now" Fund, would be honoured members of the Community, demonstrating to the world the measure of our goodwill toward other nations.

What would it matter, with such a living nucleus of really attractive and exemplary Peace Service, that some still relied on an International Police Force for security against war? And if (without that device) you cannot persuade non-pacifists toward total disarmament, is it not the plain duty of pacifists to make considerable allowance to that very half-way step toward our desired end, even though the security it offers is by no means certain, and its main use a means of bringing the doubting and divided nations just a step nearer to the organisation of world-peace?

December 5, 1948, PEACE NEWS—3

Too often the idealist fails to give them their full value, says

LAURENCE HOUSMAN

Some forty years ago, we started to make Singapore a strong naval and military base in the Far East; and to that end Parliament voted several millions of pounds. At that very moment Japan was visited by an appalling catastrophe; earthquake laid some of her largest cities in ruins. A few years ago we were given proof that all those millions expended on Singapore were utterly useless: they brought us only humiliation and defeat. Had we with "strange valour" diverted those millions to the succour of Japan in her affliction, we might have changed history.

TEN YEARS AGO

From Peace News, Dec. 4, 1947.

I met a funeral cortege in Westminster... last week. They told me it was Ramsay MacDonald's. I had forgotten.

I can remember well a Friends' Meeting for Worship in 1915 so large that it packed the Manchester Free Trades Hall. I can remember MacDonald standing there and declaring as though inspired by God, that the use of military force could never settle anything.

I saw one who afterwards became a Labour Minister in Lloyd George's War Government steal silently away from the back of that meeting, looking as though he had been whipped.

He had come to spy, and had learned more of his own conscience than he wished to know. But the MacDonald of 1915 died years ago.

—James H. Hudson, M.P.

From Russia comes one of the latest messages to be received by the War Resisters' International, expressing sorrow at the death of Dick Sheppard. It is from V. v. Tchertkoff, who writes:

"... I always liked to read his speeches and articles on the peace movement. He has shown that true religion is against war and that you cannot be called a Christian if you approve war and violence."



**ANOTHER ESSENTIAL OCCUPATION:
CATCHING PEOPLE FOR ESSENTIAL OCCUPATIONS**

PASTORAL

Peace produces righteousness

THE Apostle James surely proclaimed a clarion, pacifist message when he cried, "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by them that make peace." This is the very message this age and every age needs to hear and heed, if it would obtain "the righteousness" it so constantly demands. "Sow seeds of peace," says the Apostle, "and you will surely reap a rich harvest of righteousness."

*

People often deny this, fail to understand the psychology of it. They often indignantly say, "No; this is to put the cart before the horse, to mistake Spring for Autumn, sowing for reaping. Righteousness must come first. Righteousness is the *sine qua non* of peace. If folk will behave justly towards us, we can be at peace with them, but if they would behave unfairly and deprive us of our just dues, we can do no other but take up arms against them and fight them, and when we have obtained justice by force of arms, then, and only then, can we have peace. The fruit of righteousness must often be sown in war by them that make war."

*

The Apostle repudiates this worldly philosophy, absolutely. It is manifestly wrong because it is not the way God deals with men—contrary to His example!

The Jews of the old Covenant believed that righteousness must always be the *sine qua non* of peace. They said, "You must be absolutely holy, must fulfil all the demands of the law, every jot and tittle of it, before you can ascend into the hill of the Lord." Only when you are faultlessly righteous can you have any access to God."

*

This unlovely philosophy had two opposite effects. It produced, on the one hand, self-righteous prigs who, when they had discharged the ceremonial requirements of the law, while disregarding most of its ethical demands, imagined themselves to be quite faultless, and vastly superior "to lesser breeds without the law," and, on the other hand, outcast, despairing sinners who felt they never could be righteous, never could fulfil the law's demands, and, therefore, were banished for ever from divine favour.

Jesus reversed all this. He came with a gospel of peace to all—"to those that were near and those afar off." He taught that "in the course of justice, none would see salvation," that there was none good but One, that is God, but that God the Father comes in the spirit of peace to the unrighteous, and sowing in their hearts the seeds of love and peace, produces in their lives the fruits of righteousness, where making war upon them would surely fail. He causes His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon the unjust and the evil. He says to His wicked children, "My kindness shall not depart from them, neither shall my covenant of peace be removed from thee, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee."

*

To those who wrong Him He comes "not on a warrior's path with mighty armies strong," not with force and violence to compel righteous behaviour, but with mercy, and kindness, and an unbreakable covenant of peace; and lo! His loving kindness and tender mercy softens the hard heart, leads to repentance and brings forth a harvest of righteousness such as overwhelming might could never achieve.

Let history bear witness, the peaceable attitude of God to the unrighteous has transformed the lives and characters of the most vicious and led them into the paths of righteousness into which violence would never have driven them.

"Be ye imitators of God then as dear children," say all the Apostles. In the atmosphere of war the fruits of righteousness can never grow, but only wither and perish. Peace is the *sine qua non*. Only in the soil and climate of peace can the fruits of justice flourish. "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by them that make peace."

(Rev.) EDWIN FOLEY.

Letter from Vienna

"THERE IS ONE WORD ONLY CRYING OUT OF THE CLOUDS: 'HUNGER'"

AFTER endless years in prison and exile many of your countrymen have returned to the once-called 'City of Dreams.' I must admire their spirit and courage in returning to Vienna under present conditions. . . . These words from an English friend, who worked with the Control Authorities inside the capital of Austria, were not surprising to me as I have seen Austrians leaving London, and at the same time warned them of the difficulties before them.

The last time I saw Dr. Emil Maurer he was wearing a very shabby raincoat which I joked about, asking him if he was going to take it back to Vienna. "This coat," said Dr. Maurer, very seriously, "is going to make history. I will wear it when I arrive in Vienna. Remember, when I came to Dachau I wore this coat, and before that during my prison time in Wollersdorf under the Dollfuss regime; and later when we were all transferred from Dachau to Buchenwald this same coat was transferred too. It kept me warm when I crossed the Channel. One year later I still had the coat at the internment camp in the Isle of Man, and now I am going to wear it, shabby and dirty as it is, at the first Socialist Party meeting in Vienna." The Doctor kept his word.

Their longing

Nothing could have expressed better the typical Continental characteristic, which inspired so many of my fellow countrymen to return to Austria. They were longing to hear the church bells ringing from the famous St. Stephan's Cathedral. They hoped to see Viennese children playing in the famous "Prater" and to watch loving couples kissing and cuddling each other; reminders of their own youth. The "Riesenrad" (the famous Viennese Fun Fair) always made them realise that the world goes round and round in spite of the ups and downs which each individual life has had to suffer, especially during the last twenty-five years.

"Just think how you feel..."

JOE BRAYSHAW, of the Friends Relief Service, broadcast the following appeal on the Home Service last week. This full text is printed by courtesy of the BBC.

I DON'T think any of us will forget the bitter cold months at the beginning of this year. Part of that time I was in Germany, where if anything it was even colder. There in schools, factories, village halls and city air raid shelters I saw thousands of refugees, mainly women and children, who had pitifully little clothing and nothing but piles of straw for their beds — and often for chairs and tables as well. Every window and crack was sealed to keep out the cold, and you can imagine the stench. Nobody knows when these people can hope for anything better to call home.

THEY'RE part of the "giant agony of the world" today. We have our difficulties here, but there are millions to whom your life and mine would be just heaven. We have roofs over our heads, our families about us, and our children don't cry with hunger.

But think of the displaced persons in Germany and Austria, embittered and hopeless, unwilling to return to their homelands in Poland or the Baltic States.

Think too of people in Poland—where my colleagues tell me that last winter thousands of families lived in mere dugouts in the ground when the temperature was forty degrees below zero.

THESE are some of the people Friends Relief Service tries to help. But we need your help too. We send our relief teams on the Continent not only the supplies we buy, but the clothing that's given to us.

So far we've sent about 2½ million garments to eight European countries, though we're now concentrating on Poland, Germany and Austria.

by
GERD TREUHAFT

London correspondent
of the
Wiener-Montag.

In spite of all the cruelties and horrors which the population of Vienna has been through during the last twelve months, the Viennese still hasn't lost his sense of humour. Even so, it is understandable that he calls the newly erected Russian monument to "The Unknown Soldier" "The Grave of the Unknown Looter." This sarcastic expression is known over the whole of Austria. It gives the best picture of how the people on the Blue Danube have suffered under foreign occupation.

Today, the Austrian people are not afraid of the Russians, but through personal experience, they distrust them, and more or less, hate them. Their second and third occupation powers, America and France, they treat with great reserve. They are polite and do everything possible to avoid trouble with the representatives of Western Democracy. But the British authorities enjoy special favour.

The British people have always a weak spot for Vienna—it is, perhaps, that the people on the Thames still dream of the city on the Blue Danube, and think that the people of Vienna are still as gay and joyful as they used to be before the murder of Sarajevo opened the prospect of the first world war. Today, the Viennese

know that these liberators from the British Empire are the only real friends they have.

The question of the duration of Britain's occupation has, however, hardly been raised in any letters I have received from Vienna. And the reason for this is explained by a friend: "We live from one day to another. . . . Perhaps you in London may describe it as being in a state of fear, but you will understand our attitude when I tell you that there is one great word only which is crying out of the clouds over Vienna and that is 'Hunger.'"

"Therefore it is understandable that people don't care much about politics, or even about the economic development in their own country. The hospitals and first-aid stations are all overcrowded; people are suffering from all sorts of diseases which have become inevitable through undernourishment, and in spite of this critical food situation, the Russian occupation authorities are still living off the goods the Austrian farmers are producing. Only the other three occupation powers supply their troops with food from their own country through imports."

After exile

Yet though I explained these developments to a friend of mine who has recently left London for Vienna, his reply was—"I will face all these hardships; I am more or less aware of them, but what does it matter so long as I can see the blue waves running down the Danube from Vienna to Budapest; watch the leaves falling from the trees in the Vienna woods, and hear the real tune of Johann Strauss's waltz 'G'schten aus dem Wiener Wald'?" To see and hear it again after years in exile is like starting a new life which is always faced with hardships and disappointments."

I took this friend to the station and watched him entering the train. He is a man over sixty years of age, but when he stood at the window before the train started to move off, he looked like a little child who was expecting his first Christmas gift, and I remembered the historical saying, which applied to the Habsburg Monarchy, "Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria nibe. . . ."

The people of Vienna have only one hope, and that is to make the words, "Tu Felix Austria" (You Happy Austria) a reality again.

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KINGSWAY HALL, W.C.2

We've asked all our own friends for their outworn clothing until they're sick and tired of us. I want now to ask those we haven't asked before.

I DON'T know how you feel when you hear the world news these days. I know that when it comes on the wireless in the morning and I look across the breakfast table at my children, I feel pretty despondent and helpless.

But we're not quite helpless, for there are a few things we can do to show people in other lands that we do believe in the brotherhood of man.

You may smile if I suggest a couple of vests and a pair of gloves as a contribution to international goodwill, but believe me, it isn't trivial to the woman who has seen her child shivering, nor to the man who knows that frostbite may prevent him working for the rest of his life.

JUST think how you feel when you're utterly cold and miserable. Think how you'd feel, too, if every member of your family was like that, without hope of a warm fire or enough blankets.

Now even shabby clothing or worn footwear is useful: so long as the clothes are clean and free from moth.

We're grateful for anything, but the greatest needs are for men's clothing (including old battle dress and Civil Defence uniforms), footwear of all kinds (but please tie it together in pairs), blankets, and old sheets and towels cut up for babies' napkins. We want these urgently, and we can ship them abroad without delay, so do send all you possibly can, either to any local relief committee or "Save Europe Now" depot, or direct to Friends Relief Service, care of Davies Turner, Bourne Street, London, S.W. 1.

And don't forget. We shall be most grateful for anything you can send.



In honour of St. Cecilia

Edited by
ROGER PAGE

ON November 21, the eve of the name-day of St. Cecilia, patroness of music, the Morley College Concerts Society presented at Central Hall, Westminster, a concert whose second half was filled by Purcell's rich and ample setting of Nicholas Brady's Ode: "Hail! Bright Cecilia!", composed for performance on the saint's day in 1692.

The first half contained another work in her honour, an early, flowery Cantata: "In Lode di Santa Cecilia," with Italian text, for soprano and tenor soloists, strings, and harpsichord continuo, by Handel; also Tallis's Motet for unaccompanied voices: "Spem in alium nunquam habui," and the first performance of a Sinfonia da Camera for string orchestra by Priaulx Rainier.

This enterprising celebration was carried out by the Choir and Recorder Ensemble of Morley College, the New London Orchestra, and a band of solo singers who cannot all even be named in this notice. Walter Goehr conducted the Rainier symphony; the other works were directed by the choir's trainer, Michael Tippett. From the hushed opening of Tallis's motet to the sonorous close of Purcell's ode it was a festive occasion, enjoyed by musicians and listeners alike.

A new symphony

The new symphony will have seemed to some listeners repellent, to others exciting. Priaulx Rainier grew up in South Africa and now lives and teaches composition in England. Whether there is a "South African" element in this work I cannot judge. "English" it certainly is not. Restless—except in its slow movement, angular, marked by the persistence of certain rhythms and intervals, such as up-springing ninths, it bears the stamp of no one country, nor of any period other than the recent past and the present. Miss Rainier must have been well satisfied to have her work introduced by Walter Goehr, himself so far from parochial, so quick and penetrating in his musical perception.

Thomas Tallis's motet, as many centuries old as Priaulx Rainier's symphony is months, was in its way almost as much a novelty as the new work, because of its astonishing dis-

position of forces and because a performance at Cambridge in the 1920's is the only one that any member of the Central Hall audience could possibly have heard. It calls for a body of at least forty singers, since it is laid out for eight choral groups with five parts in each, each group employed as a unit, sometimes singly, sometimes combined with one or more units, and in several passages all eight choirs are marshalled into a forty-fold ritual of sound, solemn and hieratic. The tonal effect needs to be heard, not written about. It suggests the Heavenly Host. Maybe some composer will yet use it for a "Gloria in excelsis."

Most of the solo vocal work in the Handel cantata and the Purcell ode is elaborate, requiring of the singers a highly cultivated sense of style. For such music artless singing is not enough. The singers need to accept the composer's artifice and to enjoy displaying it.

The importance of style

Plenty of English musicians and listeners have little of this sense of style, but the planners of the Morley College Concerts know the importance of it and know to what artists to go to find it.

Margaret Ritchie (soprano) and Peter Pears (tenor) have it, exquisitely. Their collaboration in the Handel cantata was flawless. Alfred Deller (counter-tenor) has it, though at this concert he did not reveal it as faultlessly as he sometimes does be-

cause the volume of his tone seemed less steadily under control than usual.

This same sense of style informs Michael Tippett's work as choir-trainer and conductor. With the devoted support of his singers and players he was able to kindle in his audience the wonder and the joy to which he himself is stirred by Purcell's ode. For that achievement, the crown of a memorable concert that had made heavier demands on him than on any other one person, let a listener's last word of thanks go to Michael Tippett. His colleagues would surely wish it so.

DICK HOLMES.

THE SILVER DARLINGS

CLIFFORD EVANS is the star of this new film.

Unfortunately there is little to hold the interest in this inept film, which begins by telling of dispossessed crofters who turn to the sea for their living, and ends when Scotland is becoming 'herring mistress of the world.' Nobody in the cast has anything much to do except look sophisticated and talk English (with occasional bursts of what sounded very like an Irish accent).

It was regrettable that such poor use was made of the magnificent sea and landscapes that were available. Film-makers must learn, too, that to film a convincing storm at sea, they must have a storm. Trick photography can do much—but not that much.

R.R.R.

THE CHURCH SHOWS HER POWER

"A RECENT significant happening in the United States," writes the Rev. R. Edis Fairbairn from Canada, "throws a startling gleam of light upon the power a resolute Church might exercise—if it chose to do so."

"The head of the Catholic Church in the St. Louis area issued an order that negro students be received in parochial high schools. In Catholic elementary schools, negro pupils had been received for some time. In consequence of this order 100 young coloured persons entered high schools hitherto reserved for whites. A swift attempt was made to organise opposition. 700 persons met and decided to raise funds, engage a lawyer and seek an injunction. The archbishop replied to this in a pastoral letter declaring that any one who persisted in plans to prevent the education in the same schools of whites and negroes would be excommunicated. Immediately the trouble-makers ran for cover."

"The Christian Century points out that there are other considerations operating in this issue besides the simple one of colour prejudice, and that what brought the swift and effective action by the Archbishop was not so much the gross manifestation of intolerance as the challenge to the totalitarianism of the Roman Church."

"Recognising this, we can still see in this incident an illustration and a promise of what a resolutely faithful Church might be and do face to face with entrenched evil."

I.O.M REJECTS CONSCRIPTION

THE House of Keys has rejected the National Service Act of 1947. Opposition to conscription in the Isle of Man was revealed by the debate to be due to the demoralising effect of army life on the young conscript; the war-time rejection of the Excess Profits Tax and the absence of adequate training facilities on the island.

This is P.P.P. week in North Transvaal

MEMBERS of the *Pietersburg, North Transvaal branch of the South African National Council of Women last August instituted a drive for relief for Europe as the best expression of their desire to secure world peace.

A letter was written to the local Press, half-a-dozen posters were displayed in the town, a thousand leaflets were printed and letters were written to women in various centres of the northern Transvaal. That was all the propaganda that was needed and the relief drive was launched.

Since then £300 have been sent to the Save the Children Fund, together with eleven parcels of clothing and 30 pairs of shoes. Eleven parcels have also been sent to the Friends Relief Service, and money will soon be available for that organisation too.

This week a Pietersburg Peace Parcels drive is taking place. All

shoppers are being asked to buy some extra article of food for Save Europe Now.

"This campaign," writes a correspondent, "has helped to build up goodwill. South Africa is in disgrace over the native question, but another side of her character is being shown both to the recipients of parcels and to the organisers in Britain. Race relations in South Africa are about as bad as they could be, yet English and Afrikaans-speaking women have joined together to get relief to mothers and children whom they will never see."

"The Molietsiesland women, farmers wives, have no money after last year's drought, but they knit wool provided by Tzaneen women and sent off by the women of Pietersburg. Some of us are in touch with mothers in Germany, and their letters show that however tiny our effort may be, it really is doing some good."

"One of South Africa's Ministers said that any relief South Africa could send would be a 'drop in the bucket.' Northern Transvaal women feel that buckets, and even oceans, are made up of drops, and they are going to keep on with their drop."

Peace News is open for the expression of all points of view relevant to pacifism. Articles in it, whether signed or unsigned, do not necessarily represent the policy of the Peace Pledge Union, of which it is the weekly organ. Nor does the acceptance of advertisements imply any endorsement of, or PPU connexion with, the matter advertised.

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We reserve the right to hold over advertisements and to limit the frequency of continuing advertisements.

MEETINGS, &c.

KINGSWAY HALL, W.C.2. Wed., Dec. 10, lunch-hr. mtg. (1.15-2.15). "British Policy in Germany." Admission free. National Peace Council, 144 Southampton Row, W.C.1.

LONDON, W.C.1. 8 Endsleigh Gdns. Discussion lectures every Sun., 7.30 p.m. Dec. 7: "Anarchism—A New Approach," Jack Phillips. London Anarchist Group.

NORTH LONDON Region. Tottenham Friends Meeting House, 549 High Rd. (next Burgess' Stores), N.17. This Sat., 4 p.m. Christmas Social and Re-union. Dr. Alex Wood, Patrick Figgis, Gwyneth Anderson. Bring and Buy Sale, Sideshows, Childrens' Entertainment, Grand Christmas Concert, North London Players, Refreshments, etc., etc. Programme from Harry Myster, c/o Peace News, 3 Blackstock Rd., London, N.4.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

N. LONDON. The "Society of Friends" holds Meetings for Worship, to which all are welcome, at 11 a.m. Sundays at: 120 Heath St., Hampstead, N.W.3; 404 Camden Rd., Holloway, N.7; Church Crescent, Muswell Hill, N.10.

LONDON, W.C.1. 6 Endsleigh St. Sun., Dec. 7, 3 p.m. "Are we ever organised?" Discussion at special London Area members meeting and Council.

WEIGH HOUSE CHURCH, Duke St., W.1. Bond St. Tube. "The Gospel of Peace!" Sun. evenings at 7.30. Social hr. follows.

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TO LET. Divan Room, suit young man or business girl, 24s. Will discuss gen. amenities later. Box 815. C.O., 20, shortly to become involuntary land-worker, seeks "digs" in Stevenage area. Box 814.

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LITERATURE, &c.

QUAKERISM. Information and Literature respecting the Faith and Practice of the Religious Society of Friends, free on application to the Friends' Home Service Committee, Friends' House, Euston Rd., London.

PERSONAL

THE STRANGER within your gates!! He only knows German!! Don't drug him with a filthy cigarette: give him a New Testament in German or a German "Peace News" free (Das Andere Deutschland—The Other Germany). H. Hallam, 88 Burford Rd., Nottingham.

GERMANY—OFFER to collect, mend or dispatch clothing welcomed. Address below.

CANARY ISLES.—Any person of goodwill sailing soon communicate with Amy Beavon, 11 Blakesley Rd., B'ham, 25.

PACIFIST LITERATURE reqd., English or in German, to send to Germany. H. Hallam, 8 Burford Rd., Nottingham.

SITUATIONS VACANT

Situations are available only to applicants excepted from the Control of Engagement Order, 1947, No. 2021.

STONEFIELD MATERNITY Home, 58 Kidbrooke Grove, Blackheath, S.E.3. Man wanted for growing vegetables and a few flowers. Compost system in use. Acmdn. could be found. Apply Sec., giving age and experience.

HOUSEKEEPER WANTED for day school with resident staff. Apply Burgess Hill School, 11 Oak Hill Park, N.W.3. HAM. 2019.

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MISCELLANEOUS

REGINALD BAILEY assisted by Mrs. Bailey, Naturopath, Osteopath, Psychiatrist and Bates System for eyes, 124 Hoppers Road, Winchmore Hill, N.21. Palmers Green 7868. By appointment.

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Forced annexation in Palestine

COMMENTARY CONTINUED

own navel, I always begin by trying to get a grasp of the other side's views and motives, just as I refuse to believe in any particular nation's ineradicable wickedness; and on this occasion at least, the Soviet reasoning is as easy to follow as if it had been worked out in the office of any of our trade unions.

There are two problems—Austria and Germany—the one relatively easy, the other desperately difficult. A solution of the relatively easy problem can be obtained at the cost of some concessions—you are supposed to be a Russian now—whereas it is more than the cleverest man can say whether the difficult one will be solved or not. Of the two, the relatively easy one is also the very much smaller and less important. If you solve it but leave the larger one unsolved, you are not really any better off than you were before. In that theoretical situation, the factual equivalent of which for the Russians is the order in which the westerners wanted the peace treaties discussed, you are asked to tackle the smaller problem first, which means that you have to decide at once about those concessions. If the first bargain does not come off, the larger problem will not even come up for discussion. If it does, you will have made those concessions before you have any reliable indication whether they have brought you a single step nearer to a satisfactory solution of the second, much harder, problem. (You can now stop being a Russian).

Peasant mentality

I AM not libelling the Soviet representatives in saying that theirs is largely a peasant mentality—so watch a peasant bargaining in some complicated deal involving a chicken and a horse, and see if he will give the chicken away before the horse-deal is clinched. So much for the Big Four Conference.

I have placed it third in my own classification of the importance of the week's events because it seems to me that its outcome has ceased to be the largest object on the political horizon. Nothing much will change immediately if it fails; and even if it brings

about a so-called solution, I just cannot believe that this solution could conceivably be of a kind to put a stop to the cold war already being fought between the USA. and the USSR. The world is simply back where it was in 1939, with different people scrambling for the un-musical chairs. That some of the 1939 chairs have in this case not been simply removed but smashed to smithereens, does nothing to make the scramble less fierce. Nor is any useful purpose served by arguing endlessly whether the Russian or the western conception of democracy is right.

Hara-kiri

A FAR more urgent question on that subject, arising from items number one and two on my own classification list of the week's most important events, faces us in this country, while France, faced with it even more urgently, seems incapable of making up her mind, though she may plunge at any moment. That question is this: Should democracy carry its respect for the rights of the individual and of minorities to the point where it makes its own destruction easy? Must we reckon with the possibility that country after country, when it has had a surfeit of hardships (for which it is apt to blame whatever government it has) will be willing to throw its liberties away, or to let itself be cheated out of them? Or, and this is an even more frightening thought, is it possible that man's subconscious feeling of mass-guilt may be predisposing him towards an era of constraint and practical slavery? I am not asking these questions rhetorically. They are forced into my mind by the evidence of post-war developments as well as pre-war experience.

At present only America can be said to be completely free of totalitarian fears. But so, in the past, has been every country just emerging from a highly profitable war; and yet the Americans, in all innocence, may become instrumental in giving totalitarianism a lift. Their position with regard to France and de Gaulle is not unlike that of the great German industrialists fifteen years ago with regard to Hitler.

By-elections

BY the side of these issues the three by-elections of the week and even Palestine seem to me small stuff, with the exception of one point about the elections. Personally, I prefer Labour to the Conservatives in spite of the present Government's undoubted mistakes. But I should not worry unduly even if Labour lost a lot of seats, or the next general election, provided that there were a decided majority for one side or the other. I should however begin to get sleepless nights if the parties came out evenly enough to create that stultifying situation which soon produces a mass-call for a "strong man." Majorities come and they go, but "strong men" rarely go at the bidding of an electorate. One of the first things they seem to learn, sometimes even before their accession to power, is the skilful handling of plebiscites.

Consensus on partition

THE announcement that the United Nations Assembly has voted in favour of the partition of Palestine comes as I am finishing this commentary. Decided upon by a vote of 33 against 13, with ten abstentions, after a good deal of none too savoury bargaining behind the scenes, it is the first international issue ever to find Russia and America of the same mind in the United Nations Assembly. That makes it all the greater pity that, fundamentally, it amounts to an unblinking act of pure annexation, to be enforced at the expense of people with whom no one is, or has for decades been, at war. The delegate for Pakistan was saying something nobody could contradict when he declared, in the earlier stages of the discussions, that not one of the great powers would tolerate a proportionate rate of foreign immigration—not to say invasion—upon its territory as that demanded from the Arab people; and all the sympathy due to the Jews for past and recent sufferings cannot alter these fundamental facts.

SOUTH AMERICAN DEMOCRACY IS STILL STRONG

THE speaker at the National Peace Council lunch hour meeting on Nov. 26, Mr. Michael Stewart, M.P., recently led a British Parliamentary Delegation to South America.

He was alarmed to find that in this part of the world food production was tending to go down. In general, this was due to fear of a third world war with its accompanying urge to become industrially self-sufficient. The efforts devoted to creating industries, for which in many cases the country was not naturally fitted, led to the neglect of agriculture, the most solid and permanent source of wealth. Here was a really disquieting position. For the less the South American economy contributes to improving the world food situation, the greater the possibility of an outbreak of war.

S. AMERICA'S CONCERN

Alone those countries could not break out of that vicious circle. The major responsibility of trying to make the world a peaceable place must of necessity rest on the shoulders of the Great Powers. South America's concern was to make what, in the days of the League of Nations was called "collective security" a reality in the Western Hemisphere, and there was considerable satisfaction over the strides taken in this direction at the Rio Conference. Not only were the States of the whole American Continent pledged to go to one another's aid if attacked from outside, but to help any member attacked from within.

Supposing there was no third world war, and those countries were allowed to pursue their own political destiny, what sort of Governments and what way of life were they likely to throw up? Having the pre-conceived idea that in the main South America was a land of dictatorships, Mr. Stewart confessed his surprise to find that, at present, what might fairly be called democratic forces had the initiative, and were well disposed towards Britain.

THREATS TO DEMOCRACY

The future was extremely difficult to foretell. Many things threatened the democratic idea—illiteracy, poverty, lack of Parliamentary tradition, violence not confined to any one set of politicians ("the practice of not killing your political opponents is becoming almost an English idiosyncrasy")—but in all countries where democracy was established those difficulties had had to be overcome.

It is conceivable that within the next half century or so we might see in South America a growth of population, wealth and power comparable to the United States in the last century, something to alter profoundly the world balance of power. It would then be a question of first importance whether South America favoured the democratic form of government, not only to us, but to all mankind.

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PoWs MAY STAY OVERNIGHT

THE five-mile travel limit for PoWs will be extended to 100 miles for the period from 2 p.m. on Dec. 24 to 6 p.m. on December 26. This will enable PoWs, subject to the consent of their commandants, to spend two days and two nights away from their camps if invited to do so by their friends.

Announcing these concessions in the House of Commons Mr. Shinwell said: "The hosts must accept all responsibility for the PoWs who are their guests, including prepayment of their fares if the prisoners are unable to pay the cost of their journey."

It has been stated (Daily Mail, Nov. 26) that PoWs who are invited out will be given emergency ration cards for 48 hours.

Prisoners were allowed to send one extra postage-free parcel to Germany during November. Normally they are allowed to send one every three months. If they have the necessary sterling for postage stamps they may also send one gift food parcel and one gift parcel a month at normal postage rates.

POINTERS

For at least three weeks 25 per cent. of the population of the Hanseatic area of Hamburg have had no potatoes (Daily Telegraph, Dec. 1). This is considered a "critical" situation. The facts situation is described as "bad."

Last year in Scotland 21,942 children were involved in 7,429 cruelty cases, the highest number on record.

Czechoslovak workers have so far raised 1,355,970 Czech Crowns (200 Cz. Crns. = £1) for the dependents of the English miners killed in the Whitehaven disaster. The nationalised firm of Bata alone has contributed 900,000 Crowns. Many Czech miners have worked overtime for the express purpose of earning money for the fund. The final total will not be known for another three months.

An illuminated address and a watch have been awarded to a German POW, Gottfried Dappert, from the Carnegie Hero Trust. He showed great heroism in saving a man attacked by a bull at Lawshall, W. Suffolk.

Stocks are running short!

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CENTRAL BOARD FOR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

December 5, 1947

After full consideration of the anticipated future claims for maintenance the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors is satisfied that the monies held in its Central Maintenance Fund are no longer required for the purposes for which they were raised, and proposes in three months' time to transfer monies now standing to the credit of that Fund to the Board's General Fund, where it feels the money will be used for purposes as close as possible to the original.

Maintenance Funds will still be in existence and available for C.O.s in need, on account of their stand, throughout the country. Any subscriber to the Central Maintenance Fund who objects to the proposed transfer may have his contribution repaid on application to the Central Board within three months from now.

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